

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A drag box for placing an asphalt mixture on a surface, said drag box adapted to be coupled with a prime mover for pulling said drag box over said surface, said drag box comprising:

a framework adapted to be pulled behind said prime mover, said framework adapted to be coupled with said prime mover to accommodate floating vertical movement independent of said prime mover;

a non-rigid connecting structure coupled with said framework for coupling said framework with said prime mover;

a device coupled with said framework for distributing said asphalt mixture over said surface;

a blade capable of shearing asphalt mounted on said framework for forming a substantially planar asphalt surface after said asphalt mixture has been distributed over said surface, said ~~bladeshearing device~~ being moveable in a vertical plane independent of said prime mover;

a proximity control device mounted on said framework and coupled with said ~~bladeshearing device~~ for raising and lowering said ~~bladeshearing device~~ in response to elevational changes in said surface;

at least one signal generator associated with said proximity control device for producing a signal indicative of the elevation of said surface; and

at least one signal receiver associated with said proximity control device for activating said proximity control device in response to a signal emanating from said signal generator.

2. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 1, further comprising:

a prime mover for dispensing said asphalt mixture that is coupled with said drag box by said non-rigid connecting structure and pulls said drag box.

3. (Original) The drag box of claim 1, further comprising:
confinement ends coupled with said distribution device for containing said asphalt mixture within said apparatus.
4. (Original) The drag box of claim 3, wherein said confinement ends comprise skis.
5. (Original) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said apparatus includes a plurality of signal generators and a plurality of signal receivers associated therewith.
6. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said proximity control device comprises a cylinder for raising and lowering said blade.
7. (Original) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said signal generator is a sonar generator and said signal receiver is a sonar receiver.
8. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 20, wherein said auger is within 6 inches of said blade.
9. (Cancelled).
10. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said blade is concave with respect to the direction of travel of said drag box.
11. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said blade is able to be proportionally raised or lowered in response to elevational changes in said surface.
12. (Original) The drag box of claim apparatus of claim 5, wherein said plurality of signals received by said signal receivers are averaged.
13. (Original) The drag box of claim 3, wherein said signal generators are coupled with said confinement ends such that at least one generator is coupled with a first end and at least one generator is coupled with a second end.
14. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said receiver sends a signal to control the height and slope of said blade.

15. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said blade is able to be extended in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to the direction of travel of said apparatus.
16. (Original) The drag box of claim 1, wherein said drag box is able to distribute and shear asphalt mixtures that are about 3/8 of an inch to 4 inches in thickness.
17. (Original) The drag box of claim 16, wherein said drag box is able to distribute and shear asphalt mixtures that are about 1 to 4 inches thick.
18. (Previously presented) The drag box of claim 20, wherein the distance between said blade and said auger is no more than about one inch.
19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said distribution device is a pugmill.
20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said distribution device comprises at least one auger.
21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said distribution device comprises two augers that rotate in opposite directions from one another.
22. (Currently Amended) A method of leveling a surface using a drag box comprised of a framework adapted to be coupled with a prime mover, a non-rigid connecting structure coupled with said framework for coupling said framework with said prime mover, a distribution device coupled with said framework, a blade mounted on said framework, and a proximity control device mounted on said framework and coupled with said blade for raising and lowering said ~~bladeshearing device~~ in a vertical plane independent of said prime mover, said method comprising:
 - pulling said drag box in a direction of travel;
 - applying an asphalt mixture to said surface while said drag box is moving;
 - adjusting the height of said blade with said proximity control device so that it is raised and lowered substantially instantaneously as the elevation of said surface changes;
 - and

leveling said asphalt mixture using said blade,
wherein steps (a)-(d) are accomplished in a single pass.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said drag box further comprises a signal generator and a signal receiver associated with said proximity control device, said method further comprising:

measuring the elevation of said surface using a signal from said signal generator
as said apparatus moves in said direction of travel; and
processing said signal using a signal receiver.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising:

measuring the altitude of said surface using a signal from said signal generator.

25. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said asphalt mixture is substantially diluent-free.

26. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said surface is dirt, gravel, asphalt, or combinations thereof.

27. (Original) The method of claim 22, further comprising:

distributing said asphalt mixture with said distribution device.

28. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said distribution device comprises at least one auger.

29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising:

stopping said drag box from moving in said direction of travel; and
moving said drag box in said direction of travel, wherein substantially planar
movement of said blade is maintained during said stopping and moving steps.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, further comprising:

manually controlling said blade while said drag box is stopped.